

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

**Recent Poll Highlights American Support for Principles Found in
“New Employee Verification Act” (H.R. 5515)**

March 12, 2008

Dear Colleague,

Recent polling strongly suggests that the American people believe the nation’s current employment verification system is broken and that biometric technology can play a key role in preventing unlawful employment and identity theft.

Last month I, along with several of my Subcommittee colleagues, introduced a bill to reform the nation’s approach to worksite enforcement. The “New Employee Verification Act” (NEVA), establishes a new mandatory process to electronically verify the employment eligibility of newly hired U.S. workers. The NEVA also creates a voluntary system that would provide American workers protection from identity theft. This system would use private sector, government certified, experts to authenticate a worker’s identity and to then safeguard that identity through a biometric identifier. Employers are given greater confidence that they are employing a legal workforce and workers have a greater peace of mind that their identity is more secure.

The poll commissioned by the H.R. Initiative for a Legal Workforce, and conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research and Public Opinion Strategies showed that a majority of Americans support many of the key principles found in the NEVA. For example, 79% of those surveyed support the use of a biometric employment verification system. In fact, only 13% were said to “strongly oppose” such a system. Other important results from the survey include:

- 53% of the general public, and 62% of the nation’s opinion leaders, believe the current I-9 employment verification process is ineffective;
- Americans believe that preventing unlawful employment is almost as important as securing the border, with 32% believing worksite enforcement is “most important” to stopping illegal immigration, compared to 34% who believe securing the borders was most important;

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- 85% desire an employment verification system that is mandatory for all employers;
- 71% strongly support liability protection for employers who abide by the law.

The American people understand the real threat both identity theft and illegal immigration poses to our national prosperity. They also understand biometrics and effective worksite enforcement must be a part of the solution. For more information about the survey commissioned by the H.R. Initiative for a Legal Workforce please [click here](#).

For more information about the NEVA please visit the website of the Ways and Means Republicans at <http://republicans.waysandmeans.house.gov/>. If you have any further questions or would like to cosponsor the bill, please contact Kim Hildred on my Subcommittee staff at 5-4021 or Kathleen Black on my personal staff at 5-4201. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s Sam Johnson
Ranking Member